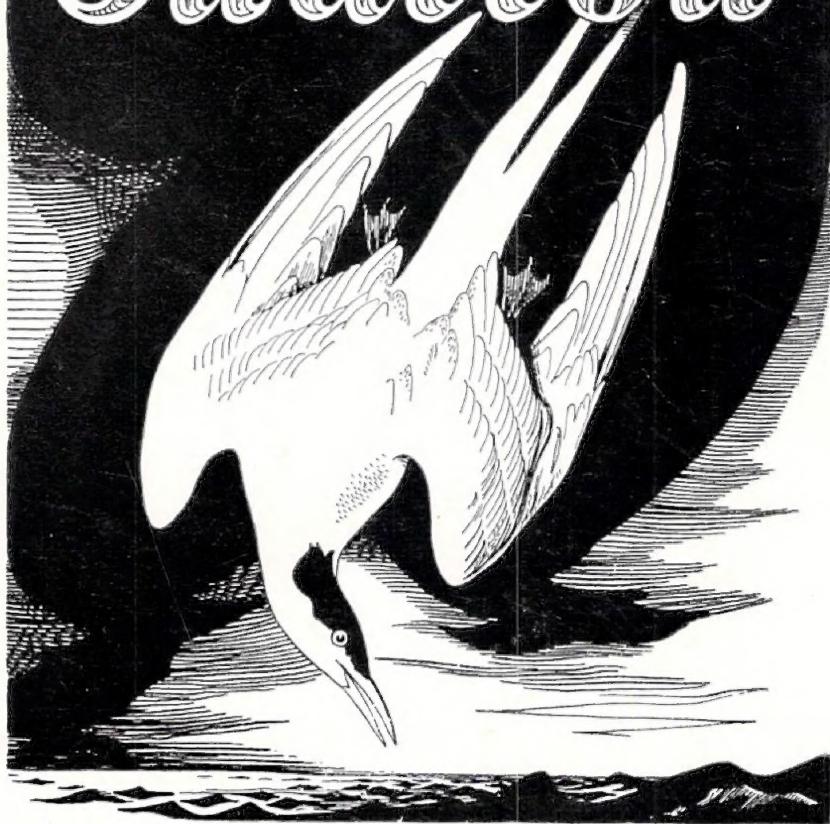


VOL. 26

1975/76

# *the Sea Swallow*



BEING THE ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE ROYAL NAVAL  
BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

PUBLISHED 1977

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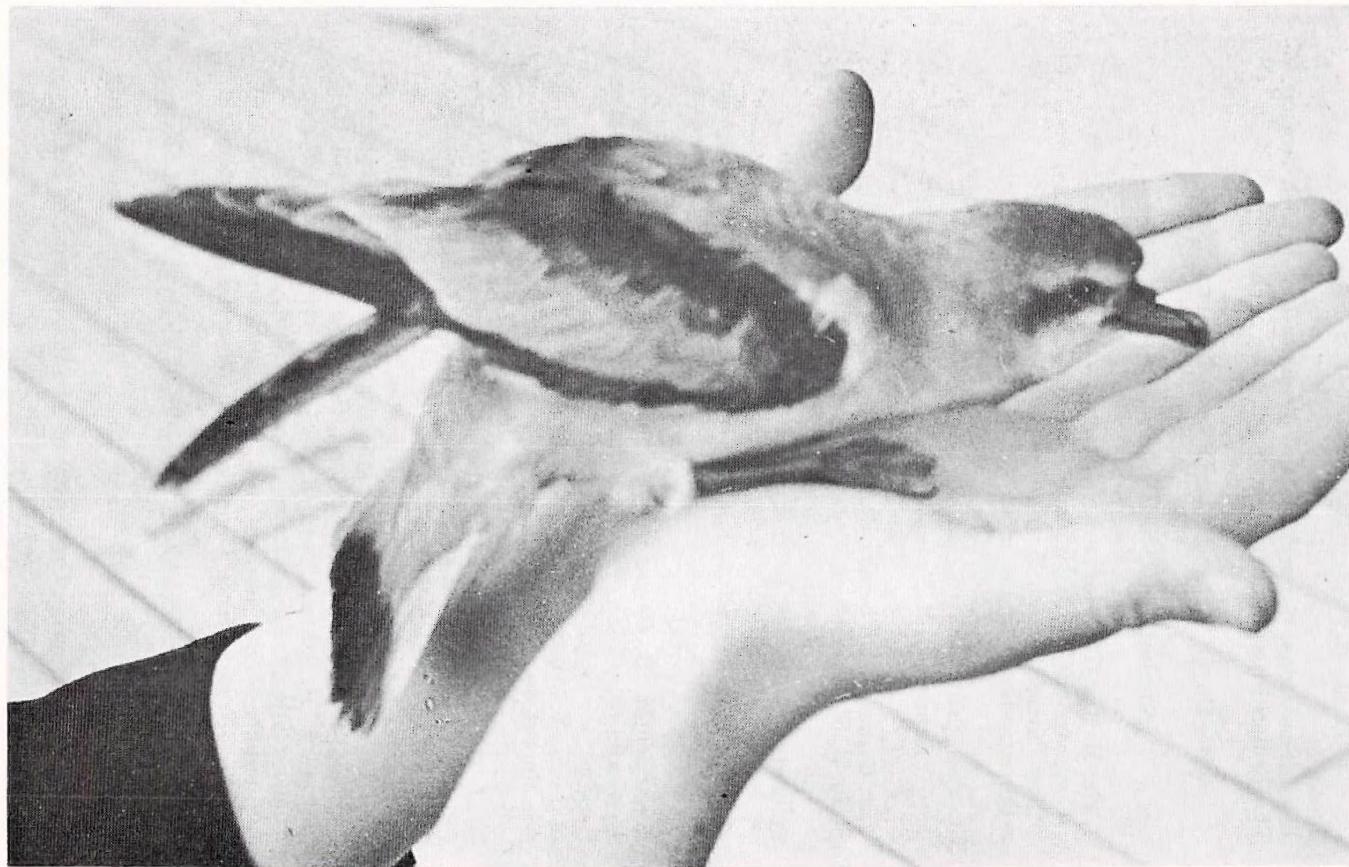
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Fluo



FAIRY PRION, *Pachyptila turtur*  
Photo: R. N. Jordan, R.N.B.W.S.

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## FOREWORD

### "THIRTY YEARS ON"

1976 sees R.N.B.W.S. thirty years old and still going strong thanks to all past and present members. During the time that R.N.B.W.S. has been in existence interest in the environment and bird life has spread immeasurably throughout all walks of life. This is also true of the interest being shown in birds at sea. The opportunities for bird watching among seagoers, be they experts or casual enthusiasts, are enormous in the greatest environment of all, namely the oceans of the world.

For those interested in bird life at sea, R.N.B.W.S. is an organisation both for the beginner and the expert. I feel it is not widely enough known among the seagoing fraternity, who can acquire much enjoyment and knowledge through membership. Perhaps we have been too modest in the past in publishing our achievements and spreading our knowledge. In any event efforts are now being made to publicise the Society a little more. Let us hope that more will enjoy membership.

It is fitting that this year a new book *A Field Guide to the Seabirds of the World* is to be published. It has been compiled by our indefatigable and indomitable Chairman, Captain Tuck; so it will certainly be authoritative and accurate. The R.N.B.W.S. is proud to be associated through our Chairman with this work. It will form a useful successor to that excellent book *Birds of the Ocean* by W. B. Alexander. It is hoped that all libraries in H.M. Ships will carry a copy of the new Field Guide.

I would like to conclude this foreword by thanking all those, including two naval funds, who have helped the Society financially in the past year by giving donations. This has been of great value in difficult times.

Let us hope that the next thirty years will see the Society going from strength to even greater strength through the enthusiasm of its members to whom we send all good wishes.

NIGEL HENDERSON, *President.*

## EDITORIAL

Since the publication of Vol. 25 – 1974/75, effort has been given to overcome the steadily decreasing balance in the Society's current account without, we hope, inflicting an undue increase in our members' annual subscriptions.

At the time of going to press with *Sea Swallow* Vol. 26 the financial position to 30th November 1976 is not yet available, but we cannot express adequately our deep gratitude to the response we have received to help us overcome the ogre of inflation.

The following donations have been received: From the Fleet Amenities Fund, £50. From the R.N. and R.M. Sports Control Board, £50.

### UNSOLICITED DONATIONS TO R.N.B.W.S. BY MEMBERS

This has been truly wonderful and acknowledged personally. Since many wished to be anonymous, we have received to date an additional sum of £195 making a total of £295.

NEW MEMBERS. 23 new members have joined in 1976.

### REPORTS FROM MEMBERS AT SEA

Sea passage report forms and census sheet passage report forms of seabirds have amounted to 82 passages, while landbird reports at sea have covered 28 passages. The latter have included some more unusual visitors on board such as a Great Blue Heron and a Greater Flamingo. 17 cases of seabirds examined in the hand and 27 cases of landbirds examined similarly have been received other than Ocean Weather Ship reports whose regular, valuable reports are much appreciated.

I wish to express my thanks also for the information we have received on bird observations contained in the Meteorological Log returns from many ships, details of which are forwarded to R.N.B.W.S. by Mr J. D. Brown monthly. I need hardly say that R.N.B.W.S. would welcome all concerned to full membership of R.N.B.W.S., and the source for obtaining membership can be obtained from our Hon. Secretary, Lt.-Cdr. MacLure, Royal Navy, at "Melrose", 23 St. David's Road, Southsea, Hampshire, PO5 1QH.

Finally, all these sea passage reports frequently contain very many serial numbers of observations of seabirds. The ocean maps on which all positively identified differing species of seabirds are plotted are now so overloaded with previous similar reports that on the more regular shipping routes, and indeed on a number of less frequented routes the occurrence of different species at differing seasons can be assessed with considerable certainty. This has been due entirely to the continuing interest and work of our R.N.B.W.S. members at sea. Long may it continue.

R.N.B.W.S. sends its greetings and good wishes to all its members.

G. S. TUCK, *Editor.*

## WHALE-BIRDS

By Commander J. R. Furse, F.R.G.S., R.N., R.N.B.W.S.

(Note by Editor: Cdr. Furse acted as principal Ornithologist during the earlier Joint Services Expedition to Elephant I., 1970/71. He is acting as Leader of a further Expedition during 1976/77.)

The old deepwater sailors knew well these little wild-flying Petrels of the southern oceans. The big clippers plying around the two great Capes of Good Hope and the Horn were escorted throughout the circumpolar westerlies by the grey erratic wraiths. The skippers and crews of little brigs and schooners out from Tonsberg, Dundee and Nantucket welcomed the whirling swarms of grey and silver birds, because they so often heralded the great whales they hunted in those cold waters. The grey birds became known to all seamen as Whale-birds or sometimes Ice-birds, as they were most numerous far south.

The link between the Whale-birds and the whales themselves was not chance. Both fed on the same bouillabaisse of crustacea and other zooplankton so plentiful in upwelling waters around the Antarctic continent. The Prions were often called Scoopers because of their habit of feeding with wings outspread and their heads underwater scooping up plankton and sieving the water out through their beaks which act like the baleen plates of the whales. The pelagic whaling fleets of Norway, Britain and the U.S.A. have hunted the whales nearly to extinction, destroying their own livelihood. (Only Japan and the U.S.S.R. still send whaling expeditions south.) So today there are few whales harvesting those cold oceans, but the Whale-birds still plane and whirl and swarm there. Their uncounted numbers have perhaps even increased as their incongruous competitors have been killed off.

Nowadays, fewer men see the Whale-birds in their pelagic ranges than did so in the last century. This is partly because of the reduction of whaling, partly because of the opening of the Panama and Suez Canals and partly because of the invention of aeroplanes. It is chiefly because these small blue-grey Petrels blend with the steely waves, to become almost invisible from closed bridges far above, so snugly windowed against the bitter outside. On the other hand we do know much more about their breeding biology and taxonomy than did the old deepwater sailing men.

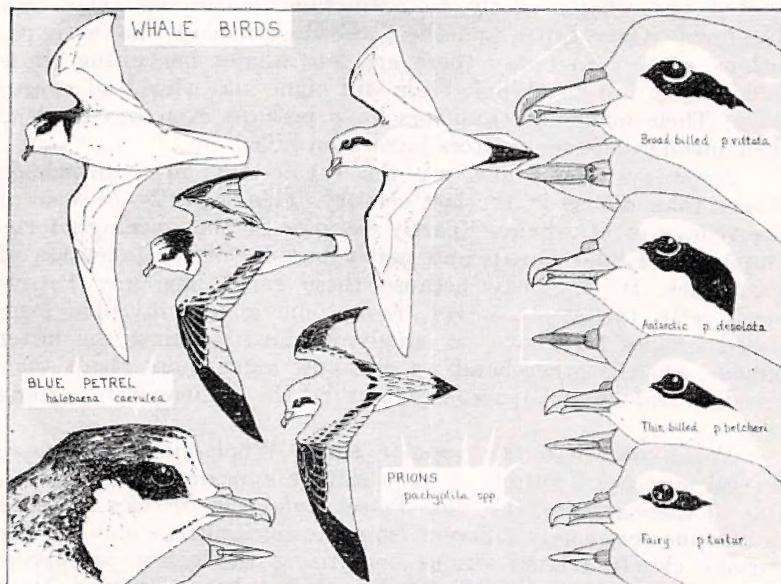
We know that the popular title "Whale-birds" embraces several species of Petrels of very similar appearance and habits. One of these species, the Blue Petrel, *halobaena caerulea*, is alone in a genus completely different from the remainder, which are the various closely related Prions comprising the genus *pachyptila*. The complex taxonomy of the Prions has been confused by a

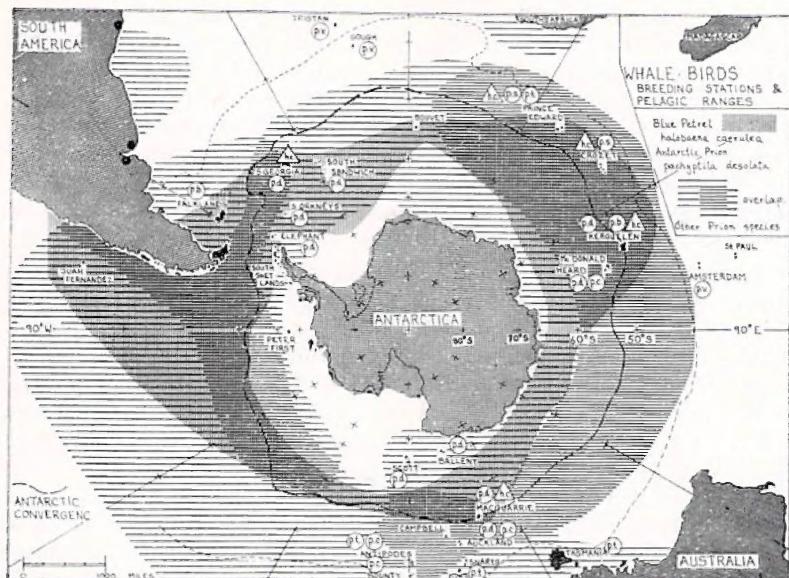
plethora of names; Murphy (1936), Falla (1940) and Fleming (1941) have reduced this confusion to the manageable six species listed below, which are those used by most authors:

- pv. Broad-billed Prion, *p. vittata*
- ps. Salvin's Prion, *p. salvini* ("Medium-billed Prion")
- pt. Fairy Prion, *p. turtur*
- pc. Fulmar Prion, *p. crassirostris* ("Thick-billed Prion")  
(southern race of *p. turtur*)
- pb. Thin-billed Prion, *p. belcheri*
- pd. Antarctic or Dove Prion, *p. desolata* ("Dove Prion").

At sea these divisions are academic, because the various Prions cannot be distinguished in flight. Attempts to identify species in flight have actually magnified the taxonomic confusion; sightings should be recorded generically as "*Pachyptila* spp" . . . On the other hand, if a Prion comes onboard, seize the opportunity to photograph it and to measure the wing and bill, particularly the diagnostic culmen length and width indicated in Fig. 1.

Fig. 1 shows the differences between the Whale-birds which are in the markings and shapes of the head, neck and tail. The Blue Petrel is quite distinct, but first one must know what to look for on the grey birds, which often fly together in mixed parties. They are also difficult to follow as they twist and intermingle erratically, and are blotted from view for much of the time as the mountainous swell of the roaring forties intervenes. The oft-quoted





square white tip to the Blue Petrel's tail is sometimes, but not always, noticeable; the black on the Prion's wedge-shaped tail shows both below and above, but again is not always noticeable.

I find the stylish flight, tapered wristy wings, high foreheads and general bill shape and size of all the Whale-birds very reminiscent of the true Plovers, although they are bigger birds (the wingspan of a Prion on Elephant Island was 25 inches). This resemblance extends to the markings of the head and breast, which I find the easiest diagnostic difference between the Blue Petrel and the Prions. In the field *halobaena*'s dark collar appears to encircle its throat (like a Ringed Plover, *charadrius hiaticula*) whilst the dark-grey smudge behind the Prion's eye is often indistinct (like a Kentish Plover, *c. alexandrinus*).

Fig. 2 shows the known breeding stations in the southern oceans. All the Whale-birds nest in burrows or labyrinthine crannies in scree, and all visit the breeding grounds nocturnally. At Elephant Island we saw them flying only between 0200 and 0500. This has prevented casual observations, so that there are still considerable doubts about breeding distributions. Until recently Blue Petrels were thought to nest in the Falklands and so to share the vernacular name of Firebirds with the Diving Petrels and Thin-billed Prions which fly into camp-fires at night like moths to a candle. Blue Petrels do not nest there, but were probably known as Firebirds, as well as Whale-birds and Ice-birds to the whalers with blubber stoves and trypot fires in South Georgia, long before the scientists quite recently rediscovered them breeding there.

Fig. 2 also indicates pelagic ranges, but these depend on scanty data from untravelled seas. The main pattern is a series of overlapping circumpolar belts forming a wide girdle which stretches north from the edge of the packice to the Sub-Tropical Convergence, near the Tropic of Capricorn. The Blue Petrel and the southern Prion species are probably all truly circumpolar away from the breeding grounds, whereas the more northerly Broad-billed and Salvin's Prions appear to remain in their own oceanic sectors throughout the year.

The Antarctic or Dove Prion is the only Whale-bird known to breed south of the Antarctic Convergence, apart from the Fulmar Prion at Heard Island. Its breeding biology is quite well known from studies in the South Orkneys (Ticknell 1962, Beck & Brown 1970). About 50,000 pairs breed there on Signy Island, yet just 400 kms. to the west on Elephant Island we found only two small colonies during the Joint Services Expedition in 1970/71. These were then the first proven records of breeding in the South Shetlands. The only known colonies further south than Elephant are the small ones shown at Scott Island and on the Antarctic Continent at Cape Denison. Antarctic Prions, like so many Petrels, nest underground and visit the nests at night to avoid the Skuas, which prefer their fat dove-sized bodies to the smaller Storm Petrels. The Prions tend to nest in colonies where there are interconnected galleries in consolidated scree or frost shattered outcrops, or in labyrinthine holes excavated in moss beds. They are typical townies, visiting the neighbours, fighting and kicking up a noise like a vast poultry farm through the hours of darkness.

The Thin-billed Prion feeds near the Antarctic Convergence. The other four Prion species are thought to feed north of the Convergence, except for the Fulmar Prion near Heard Island. The Broad-billed Prion is the most northerly and in its pelagic range off South America and South Africa is the Whale-bird most familiar to steamship seamen.

The Blue Petrel feeds far south to the edge of the pack and is fully circumpolar, but South Georgia is its only known breeding station south of the Antarctic Convergence and also the only one in the South American sector. At the end of March 1971, we first saw Blue Petrels as H.M.S. *Endurance* left Deception Island and passed northwest through the South Shetlands between Smith & Snow Islands. From there north to Diego Ramirez, Blue Petrels were common, whilst very few Prions indeed were seen. As we passed offshore in the evening, great numbers of Blue Petrels were headed toward Diego Ramirez; we believe that they must nest on these tussock islands half a day south of Cape Horn.

Could they perhaps nest further south in the South Shetlands? It is a question that is easier to pose than to disprove, but it is not a wholly irrational suggestion. The Whale-birds still hold their

mysteries. We shall be looking for them in the moraine and scree crannies of the Elephant Island Group on cold nights this January and February

## SOME NOTES ON BIRDWATCHING IN THE CARIBBEAN. 1975-6

By Lieutenant M. K. Barritt, R.N., R.N.B.W.S.

(Note by Editor: During 1975/76 Lt. Barritt was onboard H.M.S. *Beagle* surveying amongst Islands in the West Indies.)

Early contact with a local bird-watcher or Natural History group is essential to the R.N.B.W.S. member in these days of circumscribed ship visits. The individuals and organisations mentioned below showed much kindness to the compiler of this note in 1975-6, and would be delighted to see any other R.N.B.W.S. members.

### *Trinidad*

Ships in the Caribbean for extended periods may continue to use the facilities of Chaguaramas Shipyard. This is situated in excellent bird-watching country, and a short afternoon's walk without leaving the roads will reveal more species than are present in total in many of the smaller West Indian islands. Mr Ian Lambie, the Chief Customs Officer at Chaguaramas Shipyard in 1976, is a keen all-round naturalist, and is a willing guide to the attractions of the jungle hinterland, e.g. nesting hummingbirds, and the display-grounds of the White-bearded Mannakin (*Manacus manacus*).

The famous ornithological attractions of the island are the Scarlet Ibis (*Eudocimus ruber*) of Caroni Swamp, and the Oilbirds (*Steatornis caripensis*) at the Asa Wright Nature Reserve, Arima. Mr Winston Nanan (telephone: 638-3033) will hire out a boat for a visit to the Caroni Swamp, and will point out many of the other ornithological attractions of the area. The only Potoo (*Nyctibius griseus*) seen by the writer in his year in the West Indies was sighted in the swamp. Mr Lambie is on the Council of the Asa Wright Centre and is the best contact to arrange a visit. Overnight accommodation can be provided. Amongst many species which can be seen at the Centre are most of the indigenous hummingbirds, trogons, bell-birds, and manakins.

### *The Lesser Antilles*

Several very enthusiastic individual bird-watchers are active in the smaller islands.

Mr Michael Harvey of Cable and Wireless was based in Grenada in 1976. In Antigua, at the other end of the island chain, Mr Harvey has co-operated with Mr Carroll Holland of R.C.A. (telephone: 30153) to produce a list of 120 species for the island. Migrant shorebirds and waterbirds and warblers are of most interest. Each of the islands, however, has indigenous species of note, e.g. in Antigua the Blue-hooded Euphonia (*Euphonia musica*).

### *Jamaica*

The other large Commonwealth island of the region has a Natural History Society with which members should be able to make contact in the main towns. Most ships making a 'rest and recreation' visit will call at Montego Bay. Here the remarkable Rocklands Feeding Station at Anchovy (telephone: 952-2009) should be visited. This has become a tourist attraction since Miss Lisa Salmon has 'tamed hummingbirds' which will feed from bottles of sugar water held by visitors. With her most generous assistance genuine bird-watchers can sight many beautiful Jamaican birds which they might otherwise miss, e.g. the Jamaican Becard (*Platyparis niger*), and the Jamaican Tody (*Todus todus*).

### *Extra-limital ports of call*

R.N.B.W.S. members transiting the *Panama Canal* and stopping for any length of time in the Canal Zone should try to visit the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute on Barro Colorado Island in the Canal (telephone: 52-5669). Contact in 1975 was most kindly arranged by Her Majesty's Ambassador to Panama. In 1975 there were two Britons, Dr Michael Robinson and Dr Nicholas Smythe, on the staff of the Institute. Although their personal fields of work lay outside the ornithological field, they were willing guides to the best areas in which to see toucans, aracaris, trogons, motmots, mannakins, and many other jungle species.

A favourite 'rest and recreation' port in the *U.S.A.* is *St. Petersburg* in Florida. Tampa Bay, on which the city stands, is a fine seabird area. The most striking of the many species to be seen on the beaches is the beautiful Black Skimmer (*Rynchops nigra*). The Bay is the setting for a classic environmental clash between the seabird population and recreational fishermen. This has resulted in the founding by Ralph Heath Junior of the Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary, which is an inspiring example of active conservation and bird-care. The 'sickbay' and general bird-care work are of great interest to R.N.B.W.S. members. The telephone number of the Sanctuary is (813) 391-6211. Further information on the Sanctuary is held by the writer of this note.

### *Recommended Field Guides*

Birds of the West Indies, Bond J. (Collins)

Guide to the Birds of Trinidad and Tobago, Ffrench R. (Livingston)

Guide to the Birds of South America, de Schauensee M. (Oliver and Boyd)

Guide to the Field Identification of the Birds of North America, Robbins, Bruun, Zim, and Singer (Golden Press).

A VISIT TO GOUGH ISLAND, TRISTAN DA CUNHA  
AND ST. HELENA,  
NOVEMBER TO DECEMBER, 1974

By Radio Officer W. F. Curtis, R.N.B.W.S.

During a passage from Capetown to Gibraltar in R.F.A. *Reliant*, Curtis visited the islands quoted above and recorded the great variety and large number of oceanic species within the general areas.

Approaching Gough Island from approximate position 37°S, 01°E he observed Wandering Albatrosses, *Diomedea exulans*, Black-browed Albatrosses, *Diomedea melanophris*, Shy Albatrosses, *Diomedea cauta*, Sooty Albatrosses, *Phoebetria fusca*, Yellow-nosed Albatrosses, *Diomedea chlororhynchos*, Northern Giant Petrels, *Macronectes halli*, White-chinned Petrels, *Procellaria aequinoctialis*, Pintado Petrels, *Daption capense*, Great-winged Petrels, *Pterodroma macroptera*, Brown Petrels, *Procellaria cinerea*, Soft-plumaged Petrels, *Pterodroma mollis*, Sooty Shearwaters, *Puffinus griseus*, Great Shearwaters, *Puffinus gravis*, Little Shearwaters, *Puffinus assimilis*, Schlegel's Petrels, *Pterodroma incerta*, Broad-billed Prions, *Pachyptila vittata*, Wilson's Storm-petrels, *Oceanites oceanicus*, Grey-backed Storm-petrels, *Garrodia nereis*, White-bellied Storm-petrels, *Fregata grallaria*, Common Diving-petrel, *Pelecanoides urinatrix*, Pomarine Skuas, *Stercorarius pomarinus*, Southern Great Skuas, *Catharacta skua*, Wreathed Terns, *Sterna vittata* and Common Noddies, *Anous stolidus*.

On arriving at Gough Island on 12th November the ship anchored 1 mile off Transvaal Bay and a visit was made to the Met. Station. Within some 300 yds. of the station about 150 pairs of Yellow-nosed Albatrosses were nesting. Along the cliff-top several pairs of Sooty Albatrosses were sitting on eggs. Some Wandering Albatrosses were reported to be breeding on higher ground while 200 Rockhopper Penguins, *Eudyptes crestatus*, were seen in a cave, and a few Common Noddies on the wing. Great Skuas were common and the numerous corpses of Broad-billed Prions clearly gave evidence of the mighty toll caused by the Skuas. Gough I. Buntings were numerous around the buildings.

On 13th November the ship reached Tristan da Cunha where the concentration of species was very similar. During the passage to St. Helena, Great and Cory's Shearwaters were seen, and at

anchor at St. Helena Red-billed Tropic-birds, Blue-faced Boobies, Pomarine and Long-tailed Skuas, White Terns and many Common Noddies. Further north on 1st December at 20°N, 13°W about 1,200 Grey Phalaropes were observed amongst other wintering species.

## OCEAN WEATHER SHIP REPORTS 1975/76

### SEABIRDS

Ocean Weather Station Lima lies 200 miles to the west of Rockall, 400 miles south of Iceland. The position – 57°N, 20°W – is between Stations India and Juliet.

Stations India and Juliet are no longer manned – at any rate by British observers. However, Station Lima was occupied by either Weather Surveyor or Weather Reporter for the full 12 months since last October. And in line with past practice an observer on each ship has sent in detailed bird counts for each day “on station”.

We have to thank Messrs A. Allwright, R. C. Aran, D. E. C. Hampton, R. Hayward, D. Ogle and S. J. Whitelock for their efforts in maintaining this continuous record.

It is the first time that a whole year has thus been covered without a break, and the results are summarised in the table below. As explained in *Sea Swallow* Vol. 25 (p. 15) it was decided to discontinue the detailed table “A” of previous issues. However, with the figures of an uninterrupted year of observations it was felt that a useful indication could be given of concentrations and sightings over the full period – hence the table.

An observer usually makes his “count” at a regular time and over a limited period each day – it has to be fitted in with his ship-board duties. As feeding and migrating species move through the area a different picture is available to the observer at different periods during the hours of daylight. This was vividly illustrated in the past year when, on two occasions, Weather Reporter had two independent observers taking counts at different times during the day. Broadly speaking the same species were recorded, but in widely differing concentrations. For the sake of continuity the figures of one observer only have been included in the table, though of course all records remain on file for future reference.

The few reports received from Station Lima before this (July, August and part of September 1975) reinforce the figures given for those months in the table.

Sadly, there were fewer “off-beat” notes made during the year. R. Hayward (16th October 1976) reported 50 Pilot Whales – which coincided with the sighting of 5 Arctic Terns on the same day. A Storm-Petrel boarded Weather Surveyor on July 28th, and

was caught "flying up and down the alleyways and released by one of the crew". On 3rd February 2 Black-backed Gulls were reported (S. J. Whitelock) one of which had evidence of red dye on its body under the wing.

And it is worth mentioning that of the 29,279 Fulmar Petrels seen during the year, only 14 individuals were noted to be "blue phase".

### OCEAN WEATHER SHIP OBSERVATIONS

#### SUMMARY OF SIGHTINGS, STATION LIMA (57°N, 20°W) OCTOBER 1975 to OCTOBER 1976

	Month											
	Oc	No	De	Ja	Fe	Ma	Ap	My	Ju	Jy	Au	Se
Fulmar	x	x	o	x	x	o	o	x	x	x	x	x
Great Shearwater	-								-	-	o	o
Sooty Shearwater	-								-	-	o	-
Manx Shearwater	-							-	-	o	o	-
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	-											
British Storm-Petrel	-									-	-	
Leach's Storm-Petrel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	o	o	-	-	-
Gannet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	o	o	-	-	-
Great Skua	-	-					o	o	-	o	-	o
Pomarine Skua	-						-	o	-			
Arctic Skua	-						-	-	-	-		
Long-tailed Skua							-	-				
Herring Gull	-								-			
Lesser Black-backed Gull	-	-	-	-			o	o	o	o	o	-
Great Black-backed Gull	o	-	o	o	o	-	-	x	-	o	o	o
Glaucous Gull	-											
Iceland Gull	-											
Kittiwake	o	x	x	o	x	x	x	x	o	x	x	x
Black-headed Gull	-							-	-			
Terns (Sp.)	-									o	-	o
Little Auk	-	-	-									
Guillemots	-							-	-	-		
Puffins	-											
Cory's Shearwater	-											
Little Gull	-											
Red-necked Phalarope												-

KEY    x    Average sightings of more than 50 per day  
       o    Average between 1 and 50 per day  
       -    Occasional sighting

### LANDBIRD SUMMARY

By Commander M. B. Casement, R.N.

The overall size of the analysis this year is somewhat smaller because, primarily for reasons of economy, I have been more selective to show only those of greatest interest, whose identity

is reasonably certain, and are of greatest relevance to migration. As will be seen from the tables, the pattern is very similar to previous years and includes a high number of observations gleaned from the Meteorological Logs of Merchant ships for which I must thank once again Mr J. D. W. Brown of the Meteorological Office. Sadly, the volume of records from the Ocean Weather Ships has decreased now that only Station Lima is regularly manned.

Once again Lt. P. J. C. Morgan, R.N., of H.M.S. *Ark Royal* has submitted detailed records of autumn migration in the North Sea (Table D) which fits in well with the reports from east coast observatories. In October these were submerged by a huge drift of Scandinavian migrants from as far afield as Siberia. There was in particular a spectacular invasion of Goldcrests (*Regulus regulus*); for example at Dungeness 731 were ringed during October which is twice the previous annual total (see B.T.O. News, Dec. 1975).

Again as in previous years there is a high number of Owl records identified as Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*), but since in Britain 1975-6 was remarkable for an invasion of Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*), I wonder whether some of these may have been the latter species. The close similarity of the two in flight is explained in detail in an article in *British Birds* (August 1976 - Vol. 69, No. 8, pp. 1281-87) and it is suggested that these Owls are frequently misidentified. In particular it says of the short-eared in flight "... ear tufts are not usually visible and never prominent". I ask therefore that R.N.B.W.S. members pay special attention and record more detailed descriptions of all such Owl records in future.

Ships on passage clearly play an important and regular part in assisting weakened migrants to cover long distances, and over the years there have been regular R.N.B.W.S. reports of such examples, as the Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) which hitched a transatlantic lift (Table C, Ref. H). However, not always is this to the birds' advantage, as for example, the Sandmartins (*Riparia riparia*) 200nm off W. Africa (Table B) carried 530nm in the wrong direction.

The other point which stands out from analysis is that there is scarcely a month in the year when landbirds are not recorded at sea; apart from the obvious main peaks in spring and autumn, the migration season is much longer than is generally realised.

Now that the Suez Canal has reopened I am hoping for more records from the Gulf of Aden. My radar observations (1962-3) showed that there is a high concentration of migration in this area (mostly unseen at night) in a density higher than anywhere I recorded in the Mediterranean. Careful watch by ships passing through this area could be specially rewarding.

Good luck to you all in 1977.

OCEAN WEATHER SHIPS -  
STATION REPORTS OF LANDBIRDS

Analysis by Commander M. B. Casement, R.N.

The following reports have been received during the period 1975-6 (up to 1 October 1976).

STATION LIMA (Position 57°00'N 20°00'W) 210nm WSW Rockall, 450nm S. Iceland. Details are shown in the table below for all observations recorded on station. Records made on passage are included in Table A of the passage report analysis.

1975				
19 Aug-7 Sept	Weather Surveyor	1		S. J. Whitelock
14 Sept-8 Oct	Weather Reporter	1		D. Ogle
13-31 Oct	Weather Surveyor	2		M. Allwright
1-23 Nov	Weather Reporter	1		D. Ogle
24 Nov-18 Dec	Weather Surveyor	No landbirds seen		S. J. Whitelock
1976				
29 Feb-26 Mar	Weather Surveyor	No landbirds		R. C. Aran
26 Mar-12 Apr	Weather Reporter	No landbirds		D. Ogle
22 Apr-2 May	Weather Surveyor	1		S. J. Whitelock
11 May-3 June	Weather Surveyor	1	2/0 R. Hayward, D. Ogle	
24 July-12 Aug	Weather Surveyor	1		D. E. C. Hampton
15 Aug-7 Sept	Weather Reporter	1		D. Ogle

BIRDS EXAMINED IN THE HAND

Six reports were received during the period from M. Allwright (3), S. J. Whitelock (2), and D. Ogle (1). Details are given in the table as shown by notation X. BM = corpse sent to British Museum, Tring.

## OCEAN STATION LIMA

1975

Date	Time arr GMT	Species (Latin name)	Wind, Weather, Vis.	Remarks
Aug 31	pm	Wheatear (20) ( <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i> )	240/3	S 12 hrs +, good condition
		Turtle Dove ( <i>Streptopelia turtur</i> )		S 20 hrs
Sept 2		Snow Bunting ( <i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i> )	270/5	S
7		Wheatear	180/5	
Oct 13	0300	Snow Bunting	SW/4, overcast, good vis	S
14	1600	Meadow Pipit ( <i>Anthus pratensis</i> )	NW/4	S
15	1000	Redwing ( <i>Turdus iliacus</i> )	NW/4-5	S 4½ hrs. Dep SE
17	1740	Redwing	SW/4	Weak, S 24 hrs. D. X. BM.
18	0100	Jackdaw (20) ( <i>Corvus monedula</i> )	SE/4-5	S. 6 stayed until 31st. Fed in galley
20	0800	Song Thrush (2) ( <i>Turdus philomelos</i> )	SE/5-6	S. Attacked by 2 Great Skuas. 1 S 3 days
22	1200	Dunlin (3) ( <i>Calidris alpina</i> )	E/4-5 r. overcast, vis mod	Arr singly, S.
23	1200	Garden Warbler ( <i>Sylvia borin</i> )	SE/7, overcast, rain, vis mod	S. Poor condition. D.
		Blackcap (2M) ( <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i> )		S. One caught, fed. Released U.K. port
		Starling ( <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> )		S 2 days. D. X.
		Song Thrush		S 2-3 hrs
28	1500	Redwing	NW/4, good vis	S 2-3 hrs
29	1300	Redwing (8)	E/4 bc., good vis	Arr together, S 20 hrs
30	0001	Purple Sandpiper ( <i>Calidris maritima</i> )	SE/5	Heard at midnight. Found dead am, hit wire. X. BM.
	0900	Blackcap (F)	E/3-4	S 24 hrs
		Wheatear	O. cloud at 400', vis mod	Weak. S. D. X. BM

	1500	Wheatear Turtle Dove Siskin ( <i>Carduelis spinus</i> )	W/5	S 2 hrs. Dep SE S 6 hrs S 2 hrs
	1700	Redwing (16)	SW/4-5 O, drizzle, cloud at 900', vis mod	Arr NW; Dep SE
31	1000	Merlin (F) ( <i>Falco columbarius</i> )	NW/6 4/8St. 900' 6/8Cu. 1500'	S. Killed 2-3 small birds including at least 1 Redwing

1976

Apr 22	pm	Golden Plover ( <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> )	110/5	Arr E. Weak. S 3 days. D. X.
25	am	Merlin (M)		Arr E. S few days
28		Meadow Pipit	120/6	Weak. S. D 3 hrs. X
May 2	pm	Wheatear (F)	110/5	Active
3		Snow Bunting (2)	310/4	S 2 days
		Snow Bunting (7)		2 S until 12th. Dep to coast of Ireland
4		Snow Bunting (6)		
5-7		Snow Bunting (4)		
21		Turnstone ( <i>Arenaria interpres</i> )	NW/6kts, good vis	Arr SW, flew past; dep NE
23		Swallow (6-7)	S/16kts	S 4 died within 48 hrs. 2 within 72 hrs
25		Dunlin	S/12kts	S. Fed, released in Clyde
July 24	0300	Swallow	240/16kts	S
Aug 12	1500	Red-necked Phalarope ( <i>Phalaropus lobatus</i> )	220/13kts	Remained in vicinity until 13th
28		Willow Warbler (3) ( <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i> )		
29		Turnstone (3)		
Sept 6		Willow Warbler (3)		
		Turnstone		
		Turnstone		
		Turnstone		

## SEA REPORT SHEETS

Analysis by Commander M. B. Casement, R.N.

The following reports of landbirds at sea were received during 1975/76 up to 1 October 1976.

1974					
Observer/Ship	Passage	Date	Ref.	Sea Areas	Ref.
1. D. Joern, n.k.	n.k.	20 Aug-21 Sept	A	E. Atlantic (W. Africa)	
2. W. F. Curtis, R.F.A.	U.K.-Durban	26-31 Aug	B	E. Atlantic (W. Africa)	
R.F.A. 'Reliant'	Mombasa-Mauritius	2-17 Oct	C	Indian Ocean	
3. Capt. P. W. G. Chilman, M.N.	Capetown-	16 Nov-23 Dec	D	Indian Ocean	
S.S. 'Mysella'	Persian Gulf				

1975					
Observer/Ship	Passage	Date	Ref.	Sea Areas	Ref.
1. Capt. A. C. Collop, M.N.	Le Havre-Kuwait	31 May	A	Biscay	
S.S. 'Al Badiah'	Rotterdam-Kuwait	27 Aug	B	E. Atlantic (W. Africa)	
2. 2/O. R. W. Joughin, M.N.	London-Tripoli	31 Aug-9 Oct	C	Med., Biscay	
S.S. 'Cheviot Prince'	and return				
3. Capt. R. R. Will, M.N.	Birkenhead-Mombasa	15-23 Sept	D	Red Sea	
M.V. 'Rotherwick Castle'	Capetown-Antwerp	29 Oct-5 Nov	E	E. Atlantic, Biscay	
4. Capt. J. W. Waldie, M.N.	Norfolk, Va.-	14-16 Sept	F	Caribbean	
M.V. 'Atlantic Bridge'	Cristobal				
5. Lt. P. J. C. Morgan, R.N.		18 Sept-7 Nov	G	N. Sea, Bristol Channel	
H.M.S. 'Ark Royal'		(11 pages)			
6. A.B. J. Booth, M.N.	U.K., Panama	13 Aug-29 Oct	H	E. and W. Atlantic, Pacific	
M.V. 'Ravensworth'	Victoria and return				
7. Lt. M. K. Barratt, R.N.	Portsmouth-Barbados	4-10 Oct	I	Biscay, E. Atlantic	
H.M.S. 'Beagle'					

8.	2/Eng. S. J. Hingston, M.N. M.V. 'Ravensworth'	U.K., Panama. Victoria and return	3-10 Sept	J	Pacific, Caribbean
9.	Capt. K. Salwegter, M.N. M.V. 'Holland Brink'	Durban-Japan-Australia	26 Sept-24 Oct	L	Pacific
1976					
1.	2/O. R. W. Joughin, M.N. S.S. 'Cairn Rover'	Rouen-Med. ports-Belfast n.k.	26 Dec '75- 20 Mar '76	A	Med., E. Channel
2.	Yeoman B. Brewsher, R.F.A. 'Black Rover'	n.k.	13 Apr	B	Med.
3.	Capt. R. R. Will, M.N. M.V. 'Clan Court'	n.k.	1-3 Apr	C	Med.
4.	2/O. R. W. Joughin, M.N. S.S. 'Chiltern Prince'	Rotterdam-Med. ports	6-14 June	D	Biscay, Med.
5.	Capt. A. J. Palmer, M.N. S.S. 'Deido'	U.K.-Freetown and return	15-16 June 28-30 July	E	E. Atlantic
6.	Capt. W. C. W. Price, M.N. S.S. 'Mobil Transporter'	Norfolk, Va.-Cristobal Gib.-U.K.	3-6 Apr	G	Caribbean
7.	Yeoman B. Brewsher, R.F.A. 'Black Rover'	Gib.-U.K.	23 May	H	Biscay
8.	2nd Mate J. T. Podmore, S.S. 'Manchester Concorde'	Manchester-Montreal	4 Sept	I	Gulf of St. Lawrence

## ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS

This analysis includes records from the following sources:

- a) R.N.B.W.S. Sea Report Sheets (Landbirds) - indicated by reference letters
- b) Meteorological Log Returns (identifiable species only) - indicated by MET
- c) OWS reports on passage - indicated by OWS and name of ship

Observations are analysed in the following tables by sea areas:

Table A	East and North Atlantic (East of 30°W including Biscay, Iberian, and North of 51°N)
B	East Atlantic (West Africa) - Gibraltar to Cape of Good Hope
C	West Atlantic (West of 30°W) and Caribbean
D	North Sea, Barents Sea and English Channel
E	Mediterranean
F	Indian Ocean, Red Sea and Persian Gulf
G	Pacific and China Sea

Note: The reference letter in column 2 of each table refers back to the passage details shown in the table above (Column 4)

## BIRDS EXAMINED IN THE HAND

Twelve reports were received during the period from: Lt. P. J. C. Morgan (3), J. M. Welch (1), Capt. R. R. Will (4), and S. J. Hingston (4). Full details are given in the appropriate tables as shown by notation X in remarks column.

Notation BM - Corpse sent to British Museum, Tring.

TABLE A

## EAST AND NORTH ATLANTIC

(EAST OF 30°W INCLUDING BISCAY, IBERLANT, AND NORTH OF 51°N)

1974

Date (time)	Ref.	Species (Latin name)	Posn. (nearest land)	Remarks: weather, etc.
25 Mar 0800Z	MET	Short-eared Owl ( <i>Asio flammeus</i> )	44°25'N 15°49'W 300nm WNW C. Finisterre	M.V. <i>Cape Howe</i> (Capt. A. Peebles). Circled several times

1975

31 May 1600Z	A	House Martin ( <i>Delichon urbica</i> )	43°50'N 10°20'W 150nm NW Cape Finisterre	S 10 mins; cloud, drizzle, vis 5nm
1800Z		Bittern ( <i>Botaurus stellaris</i> )	43°38'N 10°32'W 135nm NW C. Finisterre	S 2 hrs; cloud, drizzle, vis 1-2nm
31 May	MET	Swallow (2) ( <i>Hirundo rustica</i> ) also 6 racing pigeons	46°48'N 09°06'W 200nm N C. Finisterre	M.V. <i>Ronsard</i> (Capt. W. A. Wilson. S 3 days Dep W on 3 June)
13 Aug 1200Z	H	Turtle Dove (7) ( <i>Streptopelia turtur</i> )	41°54'N 19°55'W 140nm SW Ushant	S 40 mins Dep SE. NW/3 overcast
19 Aug 0900Z	H	Swallow (3)	29°17'N 46°20'W Mid-Atlantic, 200' WSW Azores	S 4 hrs Dep SSW. SW/2
19 Aug 1600Z	OWS	Wheatear ( <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i> )	55°57'N 10°48'W 110nm NW Ireland	S. 220/4
12 Sept	Surveyor			
	MET	Snow Bunting (F) ( <i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i> )	53°40'N 29°32'W 640nm S Iceland 660 SE Greenland	R.R.S. <i>Discovery</i> (Capt. M. Harding).
4 Oct	I	Turtle Dove	44°47'N 8°23'W 65nm N coast of Spain	S 30 mins Circled once. 020/11kts

## ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS—TABLE A 1975 (continued)

Date (time)	Ref.	Species (Latin name)	Posn. (nearest land)	Remarks: weather, etc.
7 Oct 1200	OWS Surveyor	Meadow Pipit ( <i>Anthus pratensis</i> ) American Robin ( <i>Turdus migratorius</i> )	55°45'N 08°52'W 35nm NW Tory I. (N. Ireland)	S 7 hrs. Wind SE/3. Good vis, fair S
8 Oct 0830Z 1200Z	OWS Surveyor	Garden Warbler ( <i>Sylvia borin</i> )	56°30'N 15°39'W 110nm SW Rockall	S SE/4-5. Vis good, cloudy with rain
9 Oct 0945	C	Stonechat ( <i>Saxicola torquata</i> ) Redwing ( <i>Turdus iliacus</i> )	45°08'W 240nm SW Ushant 75nm N Spain	Attempted to land, fell into sea. Wind N/2. 6/8 Cu good vis
1620		Turtle Dove (4)		S Wind NNE/3
10 Oct	I	American Bittern ( <i>Botaurus lentiginosus</i> )	29°06'N 34°35'W 630nm SSW Azores	Heading SW. Wind 140/15kts.
1700				
5 Nov	E	Long-eared Owl ( <i>Asio otus</i> )	48°15'N 08°30'W 15nm SW Ushant	S 3 hrs. SW/2 good vis
1730				
7 Nov pm	G	Siskin ( <i>Carduelis spinus</i> )	51°10'N 5°10'W 30nm S Milford Haven	Found dead. X. BM. N/12kts. 6/8, good vis
27 Nov 1000Z	MET	Cattle Egret ( <i>Bubulcus ibis</i> )	36°56'N 14°23'W 260nm W C St. Vincent	S.S. <i>Encounter Bay</i> (Capt. D. Blackburn)

## 1976

28 Mar 1200Z	MET	Short-eared Owl	45°24'N 18°30'W 350nm WNW C. Finisterre	M.V. <i>Silverdon</i> (Capt. A. Walker). Wind 050/2. S 5 days. Dep 480nm ENE Bermuda. Wind 050/2
29 Mar	MET	also unidentified Hawk Owl Sp. Short-eared?	41°N 11°W 110nm W Oporto	S days M.V. <i>Clan Robertson</i> (Capt. T. Kirkby)
2 Apr	MET	Owl Sp. Short-eared?	36°25'N 7°54'W 50nm S C. Sta. Maria (Spain)	M.V. <i>City of Famagusta</i> S few mins. Dep NE

23 May 1900	H	Hobby ( <i>Falco subbuteo</i> )	47°N 6°30'W 95'SW Ushant	S 40 mins. SE/3, vis 5nm
6 June 1800	D	Swallow	46°42'N 6°42'W 120nmSW Ushant	Circled 5 mins. NE/3, clear skies. Good vis
7 June 0700	D	Turtle Dove	44°42'N 8°26'W 120nmN Spain	ESE/4, vis 5nm
2000		Swallow	42°29'N 9°37'W 27nmSW C. Finisterre	S W/2, vis 3nm
28 July 1900	F	Swallow	35°N 29°37'W 220nmSW C. St. Vincent	S Light airs. Clear skies. Max vis
30 July 1130	F	Dunlin ( <i>Calidris alpina</i> )	230nmW Morocco 43°34'N 9°09'W 25nmN C. Finisterre	Light airs. Overcast. Vis 1nm

TABLE B

## EAST ATLANTIC (WEST AFRICA) - GIBRALTAR TO CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

1974

<i>Date (time)</i>	<i>Ref.</i>	<i>Species (Latin name)</i>	<i>Posn. (nearest land)</i>	<i>Remarks: weather, etc.</i>
20 Aug am	A	Purple Heron (2) ( <i>Ardea purpurea</i> ) (1 A + 1 Juv.)	7.9°N 20.9°W 350nmSW Guinea	SS/10kt, overcast. Vis 3nm
26 Aug pm	B	Wheatear ( <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i> )	32°43'N 14°12'W 100nmE Madeira	NNE/5-6. S
27 Aug 0900	B	Hoopoe ( <i>Upupa epops</i> )	28°05'N 16°13'W 12nmE Tenerife	NE/4-5. S. Dep NE
28 Aug am	B	Willow Warbler ( <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i> ) Wheatear (2)	23°08'N 17°10'W 50nmW Mauretania	S N/4

## ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS—TABLE B 1974 (continued)

Date (time)	Ref.	Species (Latin name)	Posn. (nearest land)	Remarks: weather, etc.
29 Aug	B	Willow Warbler	18°22'N 17°39'W	
		Wheatear	90nmSW C.Timiris	S Var/2
		Whimbrel ( <i>Numenius phaeopus</i> )	(Mauretania)	S Dep ESE
29 Aug	A	White Wagtail (Juv.) ( <i>Motacilla alba</i> )	8.7°N 22.8°W	Arr N. Dep S
30 Aug 0915	B	Knot ( <i>Calidris canutus</i> )	400nmSW Gambia	S Fed on insects
31 Aug 1510	B	Short-billed Dowitcher ( <i>Limnodromus griseus</i> )	13°29'N 17°44'W 60nmW Gambia	Arr N. Dep SE. SE/3-4
31 Aug	A	Swallow ( <i>Hirundo rustica</i> )	8°57'N 17°23'W 160nmW Freetown	Arr N. Dep SE. Var/2 (See also Table B Sea Swallow 25)
2 Sept	A	Whimbrel	9.2°N 23°W	Circled ship
6 Sept	A	Swallow	400nmSW Gambia	
			9.2°N 23°W	Circled several times.
			400nmSW Gambia	Var: rain showers
			9.2°N 23°W	Circled. NW/5kts.
			400nmSW Gambia	(Dragonflies and butterflies previous eve.)
12 Sept	A	Whimbrel	9.2°N 23°W	S 1 hr. NW/15kts, showers.
13 Sept	A	Swallow	400nmSW Gambia	Circled
		Golden Oriole (F/Juv.) ( <i>Oriolus oriolus</i> )	9.2°N 23°W	Circled
			400nmSW Gambia	
			9.2°N 23°W	S 1 hr
			400nmSW Gambia	
21 Sept	A	Whimbrel	13°N 21°W	Circled
			230nmW Gambia	
			180nmSE C. Verde Is.	
22 Sept	A	Swallow (2)	13°N 21°W	Circling
		Common Sandpiper ( <i>Tringa hypoleucos</i> )	230nmW Gambia	
			180nmSE C. Verde Is.	
			13°N 21°W	Passing. Called
			230nmW Gambia	
			180nmSE C. Verde Is.	

23 Sept A Garden Warbler (*Sylvia borin*) 13°N 21°W  
230nmW Gambia  
180nmSE C. Verde Is.

S Caught and fed. Died 24th

1975

27 Aug 0650Z B Swift (*Apus apus*) 21°N 18°10'W  
280° Mauretania 65nm  
21 Oct MET Sandmartin (6) (*Riparia riparia*) arr. 9°N 17°30'W  
200nmSW Guinea  
dep. 17°20'N 18°W  
100nmW Mauretania

S 1 hr. Exhausted. NNW/4,  
cloudy, vis 8nm

M.V. *Strathavar* (P. & O.,  
Capt. M. J. Charlesworth)  
S 2½ days, and carried 530nm  
in wrong direction

S 2 hrs. E/2. Good vis

S 6 hrs

29 Oct 1700 E Bar-tailed Godwit  
(*Limosa lapponica*) 7°N 14°30'W  
Swallow 100nmSW Freetown  
Turtle Dove (2)

100nmW Mauretania

30 Oct 1000 E Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*) 10°30'N 17°30'W  
75°SW Guinea

S 2 hrs. E/3

7 Nov 1630 MET Peregrine Falcon  
(*Falco peregrinus*) 5°S 5°07'W  
700nmS Ivory Coast

M.V. *Clan MacNair* (Capt. J.  
Howson),  
S 15 hrs, SE/3

21 Nov MET Common Egret (*Egretta alba*) 700nmE Ascension I.  
12°39'N 18°06'W  
80nmSW Guinea

S.S. *Sterling Bridge*  
S

1976

9 Jan 1210Z MET Grey Heron (Juv.) (*Ardea cinerea*) 18°02'N 17°52'W  
220nmW Mauretania

M.V. *British Avon* (BP  
Tankers). NE/5 b., good vis

14 Feb 1000 (local) MET African Hoopoe (*Upupa africana*) 31°10'S 15°48'E  
110nmW S. Africa

M.V. *Clan Ranald* (Capt. N.  
F Wray-cook). S

29 Feb 1300 MET Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) 29°N 14°20'W  
25nmW Lanzarote  
(Canaries)

M.V. *London Fusilier* (Capt.  
W. W. Brown). Flew into  
wheelhouse, Dep SE into  
strong headwind

## ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS—TABLE B 1976 (continued)

Date (time)	Ref.	Species (Latin name)	Posn. (nearest land)	Remarks: weather, etc.
15 June	E	Swift	25°05'N 16°46'W	
1400			90nmW Sahara	
16 June	E	Peregrine Falcon? or Lanner Falcon ( <i>Falco biarmicus</i> )	19°25'N 17°55'W	
1630 also MET			170nmW Mauretania	Arr S. Dep N. Did not stop. NNE/4, 5nm, clear sky
				Arr N. S 6 hrs+. N/4, clear sky, good vis. Attempted to catch flying fish

TABLE C

WEST ATLANTIC (WEST OF 30°W) AND CARIBBEAN

1975

Date (time)	Ref.	Species (Latin name)	Posn. (nearest land)	Remarks: weather, etc.
3 Sept 1600-1900+	J	Barn Swallows ( <i>Hirundo rustica</i> ) also a few Tree Swallows? ( <i>Iridoprocne bicolor</i> )	Caribbean 10°15'N 79°43'W 40nmN Panama coast	Small parties passing at rate of 250-300/hr.
5 Sept 1200Z	MET	Yellow-throat (F) ( <i>Geothlypis trichas</i> )	29°06'N 64°12'W 170nmS Bermuda	Several S few mins. Calls continued after dark.
14 Sept 1200	F	White Throated Swift ( <i>Aeronautes saxatilis</i> )	18°49'N 77°24'W 60nmS Cuba 20nmN Jamaica	M.V. <i>Halifax Star</i> (Capt. W. A. Davidson). S until arr port 16th. SW/2
15 Sept 0800	F	Green Heron ( <i>Butorides virescens</i> )	14°45'N 76°55'W 190nmS Jamaica	S 15 mins. Dep N. NE/5
16 Sept 0730	F	Cattle Egret ( <i>Bubulcus ibis</i> )	10°17'N 79°28'W 40nmN Panama	Arr NNE. Dep S. S 1 hr. Var/1
16 Sept	MET	American Kestrel ( <i>Falco sparverius</i> )	Off Newfoundland, nr. Belle Isle	M.V. <i>Manchester Challen</i> (Capt. J. Illingworth). S 4 days. Fed liver

29 Sept	H	Palm Warbler ( <i>Dendroica palmarum</i> )	12°34'N 68°29'W 75nmN Venezuela	S until noon. Ate insects.
5 Oct 1000(L)	MET	Short-eared Owl ( <i>Asio flammeus</i> )	23°12'N 48°25'W 1050nmSE Bermuda	Dep NW M.V. <i>Explorer</i> (Capt. C. D. Riley). C 4 hrs. Overcast 050/2
16 Oct	MET	Osprey ( <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> )	1400nmSW Azores 40°30'N 69°W Off Nantucket Lt. Vessel	M.V. <i>Cargo Zeal</i> (Capt. B. Nelson)
20 Oct 1600(L)	H	Cattle Egret	arr. 4°39'S 30°44'W 160nm Noronha I. (Off S. America) Dep. 27°20'N 16°35'W	Exhausted. Fell into water but regained deck. S 9 days. Fed. Released 26th
29 Oct 1600(L)	MET	Black-capped Chickadee ( <i>Parus atricapillus</i> )	40nmN Tenerife 34°N 63.8°W	M.V. <i>Explorer</i>
18 Nov	MET	Swallow/Swift Sp?	90nmNNW Bermuda 20°10'N 54°12'W 430nmNE Antigua 950nmSE Bermuda	S M.V. <i>Plainsman</i> (Capt. H. Traynor). S

## 1976

3 Apr 0800	G	Cattle Egret (2)	26°35'N 74°30'W 90nmNW Bahamas	S One 12 hrs. one 24 hrs. N/3, good vis
6 Apr 1030	G	Cattle Egret (2)	15°30'N 76°40'W 140nmS Jamaica	Not same as earlier two
13 Aug 1400Z	MET	Mourning Dove ( <i>Zenaidura macroura</i> ) also Woodpecker Sp? + numerous small Warblers	36°15'N 73°50'W 100nmE C. Hatteras	S.S. <i>Opalia</i> (Shell Tankers, Capt. R. Lumsden). 6"-8" bat also seen
4 Sept 1600Z	I	Pine Warbler ( <i>Dendroica striata</i> ) Tree Swallows	49°55'N 65°W Gulf of St. Lawrence	S 4 hrs Arr SW. Dep NE. S 1 min SSW/2

TABLE D  
NORTH SEA, BARENTS SEA AND ENGLISH CHANNEL

1975

Date (time)	Ref.	Species (Latin name)	Posn. (nearest land)	Remarks: weather, etc.
27 Aug	MET	Grey Heron ( <i>Ardea cinerea</i> )	71°03'N 36°41'E 180nm NE Murmansk	M.V. <i>St. Benedict</i> (Trawler) S. Dep NW
9 Oct 1030	G	Short-eared Owl ( <i>Asio flammeus</i> )	58°N 2°06'W 25nm N Kinnairds Hd.	Arr from and returned to H.M.S. <i>Kent</i> during RAS. 080/6kts
		Golderest (M) ( <i>Regulus regulus</i> )		Found dead. X. BM.
		Robin ( <i>Erithacus rubecula</i> )		S Several other small pas- serines inc. "Thrushes"
11 Oct 0845	G	Blackbird (M) ( <i>Turdus merula</i> )	Moray Firth 25nm N. coast of Scotland	S Dep S
		Arctic Redpoll (2) ( <i>Acanthis hornemannii</i> )		Seen from 6ft. Dep S
		Golderest		
0855		Redwing ( <i>Turdus iliacus</i> )		Wind var. Vis VG.
1100-1200		Fieldfare (9) ( <i>Turdus pilaris</i> )		Dep S
12 Oct	G	Steady passage all day of uniden- tified passerines including:		Var/1-2, overcast
		Fieldfares		Died. X. BM.
		Golderests		
		Lesser Redpoll (M) ( <i>Acanthis flammea cabaret</i> )		Caught X. BM.
		Starling ( <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> )		S/10kts. 8/8 cloud, vis excel- lent
13 Oct 1130	G	Migration continuing	58°N 2°W	
1345		Starling (3)	25nm N Kinnairds Hd.	
1400		Fieldfare (15)		
1405		Fieldfare (50+)		
		Blackcap (2M + 1F) ( <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i> )		

1430		Starling (2)		
1530		Blackcap (F)		
		Blackbird (M)		
1115-1600		also 100+ unidentified passerines		
14 Oct	G	Small + medium passerines (200+)		
1000-sunset		Goldersts (50+)	Moray Firth	SE/10kts. 6/8, vis 20nm
		Robin	58°N 2°W	
		Greenfinch (2)		
		( <i>Carduelis chloris</i> )		
1430		Brambling (20+)		In flock, all same species.
		( <i>Fringilla montifringilla</i> )		S 20 mins
15 Oct	G	Starling (2)	Moray Firth	Found between decks.
		Blackcap (F)	58°N 2°W	Dep but landed in water
am		Golderest (10+)		Dep S
		Fewer passerines to-day		SE/10kts, vis 10nm
16 Oct	G	Starling (2)	59°N 0°15'W	No wind, thick fog, S all day
			65nmE Shetlands	
0830-1740		Robin		
		Brambling		
17 Oct	G	Starling	58°10'N 1°W	Resident? W/4kts, good vis,
0930			45nmNE Kinnairds Hd.	clear
1700		Great Grey Shrike		S overnight
		( <i>Lanius excubitor</i> )		
19 Oct	G	Blackcap (4m + 1F)	Moray Firth	S S/18kts, 6/8 at 1000 ft, good
		Starling	58°N 2°W	vis
			25nmN Kinnairds Hd.	
20 Oct	G	Starling (2)	Moray Firth	S 20kts, 4/8 at 1000 ft,
		Redwing		Vis 8nm
		Golderest (10-15)		Living inside 'Skynet' aerial
		Brambling		S 10 mins
		Blackcap (2M + 1F)	Moray Firth	
21 Oct	G	Redwing		S 10 mins
0910		Blackcap		S 20 mins
1210		Brambling (7-8)		S 30 mins
1330-1400		Robin		S 10 mins

## ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS—TABLE D 1975 (continued)

Date (time)	Ref.	Species (Latin name)	Posn. (nearest land)	Remarks: weather, etc.
1525		Fieldfare (20-30)		
1620				
22 Oct	G	Starling (4) Lesser Redpoll Goldcrest (2)	Moray Firth	Flock flew past S. SE/20kts, 8/8 good vis Remained day S 10 mins Still in 'Skynet' aerial. S/20kts, 4/8 at 2000ft. good vis
23 Oct	G	Starling (4) Goldcrest (6)	Moray Firth	Resident? In 'Skynet' aerial
24 Oct	G	Starling (2)	Moray Firth	From 22nd? Goldcrests gone
27 Oct	G	Goldcrest	50°12'N 0°358'W	S 10 mins inside Phantom a/c.
1550			25nmSE Isle of Wight	Dep NW. SE/9kts, 4/8 at 1000ft

Note. The heavy passage of Goldcrests during this period of relatively light winds followed strong westerly and north-westerly winds 8-10 Oct. Further confirmation is given in the following MET report from M.V. *British Fulmar* 14-17 Oct. on passage Europort to Grangemouth: "numerous Starlings, a Fieldfare and unidentified 'Hawk' which ate 2 Goldcrests".

## 1976

27 Feb	A	Stonechat (F) ( <i>Saxicola torquata</i> )	50°20'N 2°W 26nm Portland 125°	Arr ENE. S SE/2, overcast. Fog
0730				
1045		Golden Plover ( <i>Pluvialis apricarius</i> )	50°10'N 2°40'W 24nm Portland 200°	Arr N. S
20 Mar	A	Blackbird (F) Short-eared Owl? ( <i>Asio flammeus</i> )	56°15nm 2°42'E 155nmNE Flamborough Hd.	Arr N. S Flew past. SSE/5-6. Clear sky, good vis
1900				

TABLE E  
MEDITERRANEAN

1975				
Date (time)	Ref.	Species (Latin name)	Posn. (nearest land)	Remarks: weather, etc.
18 Apr 0400Z	MET	Grey Heron ( <i>Ardea cinerea</i> )	34°44'N 23°14'E 60nmSW Crete	M.V. <i>Frontier</i> (Capt. K. Lehepuu). S 4 hrs
6 Sept 1000	C	Redstart (M) ( <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i> )	32°23'N 18°20'E 70nmW Benghazi	S 10 mins. ENE/2
22 Sept	MET	Grey Heron (61)	36°31'N 18°20'E 25'SSE Sicily	S.S. <i>Bengloe</i> (Capt. H. McIntosh). In V-formation flying S
5 Oct	C	Chiff-Chaff ( <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i> )	36°55'N 00°54'E 30nmN C. Tenes	Arr E. S briefly. ENE/4-5

1976				
Date (time)	Ref.	Species (Latin name)	Posn. (nearest land)	Remarks: weather, etc.
1 Apr 1600	C	Robin ( <i>Erithacus rubecula</i> ) Greenfinch ( <i>Carduelis chloris</i> )	40°N 13°30'E 45nmSW Naples	S throughout day. N/3, vis 4nm
2 Apr 1200	C	Swallow (2) ( <i>Hirundo rustica</i> ) House Martin ( <i>Delichon urbica</i> ) Long-eared Owl ( <i>Asio otus</i> )	37°N 18°12'E 105nmE Sicily	S 4 hrs. N/2, vis 7nm S One dd 3rd; other S 3 days
3 Apr pm	C	Yellow Wagtail (2) ( <i>Motacilla flava</i> ) Swallow Robin	34°38'N 25°36'E 45nmS Crete	S briefly. WNW/3, 9nm Died. X
		Dartford Warbler ( <i>Sylvia undata</i> ) Wheatear (F) ( <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i> ) "Flava" Wagtail	34°42'N 24°E 9nmSW Crete	Found dead. X Found dead. X Found dead. X

## ANALYSIS BY SEA AREAS—TABLE E 1976 (continued)

Date (time)	Ref.	Species (Latin name)	Posn. (nearest land)	Remarks: weather, etc.
13 Apr 0630-0815	B	Woodchat Shrike ( <i>Lanius senator</i> ) Whitethroat ( <i>Sylvia communis</i> ) Hoopoe ( <i>Upupa epops</i> ) Nightingale ( <i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i> ) Sub-alpine Warbler ( <i>Sylvia cantillans</i> ) Lesser Kestrel (M) ( <i>Falco naumanni</i> )	36°35'N 13°53'E 35nmNW Gozo	Overcast, heavy hailstorm. ENE/5
3 July 1100	D	Swallow	39°58'N 05°30'E 53nmE Minorca	Killed by Shrike
4 July 1100	D	Swift (2) ( <i>Apus apus</i> )	38°08'N 01°04'E 45nmSSW Ibiza	Flying low, SE Arr. ENE S 24 hrs. Var/1-2 b. good vis S 15 mins. E/2

TABLE F  
INDIAN OCEAN, RED SEA AND PERSIAN GULF

1974

Date (time)	Ref.	Species (Latin name)	Posn. (nearest land)	Remarks: weather, etc.
2 Oct pm	C	Curlew Sandpiper ( <i>Calidris ferruginea</i> )	07°50'S 54°40'E SW Seychelles	Dep SE, lt airs
10 Oct 1430	C	Temminck's Stint ( <i>Calidris temminkii</i> )	10nmS Egmont I.	Arr W, dep E, lt airs
16 Oct 1540	C	Yellow-billed Egret (19) ( <i>Mesophoyx intermedius</i> )	14°21'S 49°29'E E Madagascar	Arr NW, dep SE, lt airs

17 Oct 0940	C	Common Sandpiper ( <i>Tringa hypoleucos</i> )	17°34'S 38°29'E 40nmSE Mozambique	Arr N, dep SW, NE/4
16 Nov 1700	D	Peregrine Falcon (2) ( <i>Falco peregrinus</i> )	14°50'S 43°23'E	S 2nd 40 mins after 1st. Light airs, bc
17 Nov 1400	D	Cattle Egret ( <i>Ardeola ibis</i> )	10°58'S 45°20'E 110nmSSE Aldabra 8nmNNW Comoro Is. 29°44'N 48°50'E	S until dark. E/3 bc
29 Nov 0900	D	Isabelline Wheatear ( <i>Oenanthe isabellina</i> )	17nm offshore	S ENE/2. bc
11 Dec 0700	D	Starling ( <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> )	11°19'N 55°33'E 98nmSE E. Socotra	S 5 hrs. E/4. bc

### 1975

18 Sept 1700	D	Turtle Dove (6) ( <i>Streptopelia turtur</i> )	24°45'N 36°E (Red Sea)	S 3 days. NNW/3
22 Sept 1200	D	Palm Dove (2) ( <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i> )	12°15'N 50°45'E (Red Sea)	S Var/1
23 Sept 1200	D	White Wagtail ( <i>Motacilla alba</i> )	12°15'N 50°45'E (Red Sea)	S Var/1
29 Oct	MET	White Wagtail	15°30'N 58°E	S.S. <i>Lacoma</i> (Capt. B. Wilcock)
12 Nov	MET	Malayan Night Heron (Juv) ( <i>Gorsachius melanophrys</i> )	160nmSE Kuria, Muria Is. 5°30'N 81°E 10nmS Sri Lanka	M.V. <i>Preisander</i> (Capt. L. H. Pound)

### 1976

2 Apr	MET	Lesser Kestrel? (7) ( <i>Falco naumanii</i> )	27°N 52°22'E	M.V. <i>British Avon</i> (D. McCallum) S 6 hrs
1 May	MET	Black Kite (c60) ( <i>Milvus migrans</i> )	45nmS Iran coast Red Sea	M.V. <i>Yorkshire</i> Many perched in yards. 4 caught, killed and cooked by Chinese crew

TABLE G  
PACIFIC AND CHINA SEA

1975				
Date (time)	Ref.	Species (Latin name)	Posn. (nearest land)	Remarks: weather, etc.
5 Sept 1800	J	White-throated Swift ( <i>Aeronautes saxatilis</i> )	7°21'N 82°52'W 45nmS Panama	Arr SW. S until am 6th. SSW/4. 8/8, rain, vis fair
7 Sept 1200	H	Cattle Egret ( <i>Ardeola ibis</i> )	27°09'N 144°39'W 9nmS Benito Is.	S 4 hrs. Dep SE singly. Light airs
18 Sept	MET	Black Turnstone ( <i>Arenaria melanocephala</i> )	21°36'N 121°W 25nmS Formosa	M.V. <i>Sugar Refiner</i> Identified by S. J. Hingston. Caught and fed 29 days. Photos. X 3/8Cu, Vis vg
8 Oct	MET	Common Egret ( <i>Egretta alba</i> )	25°56'N 133°45'E 300nmE China mainland 300nmS Japan	S.S. <i>Sterling Bridge</i> (Capt. D. McDonald). Circled 3hrs S
9 Oct 0900	MET	Phylloscopi Warblers (3) Arctic Warbler? (2) ( <i>Phylloscopus borealis</i> ) Green Warbler? ( <i>Phylloscopus nitidus</i> )	7°48'N 117°06'E 3½nmW Balabac Is. (Philippines)	M.V. <i>Sugar Express</i> (S. J. Hingston). 7/8Cu St. Shrs. Died 1-2 days. Photos. X
15 Oct 0030Z 2310Z	MET	Northern Goshawk? Pacific Reef Heron (2) ( <i>Egretta sacra</i> )	28°42'N 133°27'E 170nmS Japan	S.S. <i>Sterling Bridge</i> S 20 mins, ate "Thrush"-like bird S Medium-sized bat also seen next day.
N.B.—Typhoon 'Cora' had passed W 4 days earlier				
14 Nov 1600	MET	Common Egret	02°55'N 102°50'W 730nmW Galapagos Is.	M.V. <i>Cedric</i> (Capt. C. Earl). S 2 hrs

27 Nov 0855Z	MET	Swainson's Lorrikeet (3) ( <i>Zosterops swainsoni</i> )	10°46'S 132°50'E 16nmNW New Year I.	Arr prior to heavy rain shower. Dep 280700 SE, towards Bathurst I. 65nm. SE/F4 overcast S.S. <i>Northern Star</i> (Capt. W. A. Murison). S 15 mins
4 Dec 0855Z	MET	Orange-headed Thrush ( <i>Zoothera citrina</i> )	2°30'N 101°15'E Malacca Straits	

### 1976

28 Mar 0200Z	MET	Java Sparrow ( <i>Padda oryzivora</i> )	16°53'N 117°38'E 150nmE Luzon	M.V. <i>Silverford</i> (Capt. R. Sidney)
30 Mar	MET	Plumed Egret ( <i>Egretta intermedia</i> )	3°05'N 101°40'E Malacca Straits	S.S. <i>Osaka Bay</i> (Capt. R. Moore).
17 Apr 0100Z	MET	Pacific Swallows (100+) ( <i>Hirundo tahitica</i> )	31°N 126°17'E 250'E Shanghai	M.V. <i>Strathbrora</i> (P. & O. Capt. A. Dorkins)
2/3 June	MET	Purple Gallinule ( <i>Porphyrrula martinica</i> )	7°55'N 82°08'W S. Coast Costa Rica	M.V. <i>Gazana</i> (P. & O.) Found dead in morning
29 June 2100Z	MET	Osprey ( <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> )	27°06'N 115°12'W 37nm coast of California	M.V. <i>Fresno City</i> (Capt. D. Jack). Circled 3 hrs

## SOME EXTRACTS FROM METEOROLOGICAL REPORTS 1975/76

From notes received and selected by  
Captain N. B. J. Stapleton, R.D.

(*Note by Editor* It is a well-deserved tribute to those sharing our interest in birds at sea that the Meteorological Office now receives in Met. Log returns more reports about seabirds than all others put together, with the exception perhaps of marine life. We thank all concerned over the year. Due to the large input, all of which are taken note of, and to restriction in space, we publish in this section mainly those which throw either new or particular aspects on the habits of birds at sea.)

### ALBATROSS ONBOARD

Albatrosses are very rarely found onboard, and always appear gentle and easily handled. When Captain I. R. Ansell, S.S. *Benreoch*, was on passage from U.K. to Durban on 28th June 1975 in position 26.55 South, 12.00 East, a young Albatross landed on deck. As the Second Engineer approached, it sat down and allowed him to lift it in his arms without any fuss, spread its wings and glided from the ship unharmed.

Its identity was not established but clearly one of the smaller species of Albatross commonly known as a "Mollymawk".

### PETRELS AND SHEARWATERS

When Captain J. Howarth, M.V. *Ulster Star*, was on passage from Suez to Melbourne in position 14.08 South, 86.10 East, in the Indian Ocean on 9th February 1976 large seabirds were seen fishing about 200 yards from the ship.

As quoted, these would have been Pale-footed Shearwaters, *Puffinus carneipes*, which breed off the south-west coast of Australia and after their breeding season migrate towards the Arabian Sea and are seen regularly in the eastern section of the Indian Ocean and later off the Arabian coast.

### STORM-PETREL ONBOARD

Captain J. Conn, M.V. *Dunstanburgh Castle*, in position 20.54 North, 17.03 West, on 7th June 1975, reported that an exhausted seabird crashed onboard with oil on its wings and head feathers in a ragged state. The Electrician took charge and made it comfortable in his cabin. After 36 hours it began to recover and flutter about the cabin. When the ship was passing through the Canary Islands later it had recovered and flew off into the wind with no difficulty. From the description and measurements the bird was probably a Madeiran Storm-petrel, *Oceanodroma castro*.

## GULLS

(*Note by Editor* Gulls did not figure prominently in these reports, but one more unusual occurrence is recorded.)

Captain D. Newlin, M.V. *Columbia Star*, on passage from Christobal to Le Havre on 17th February 1975, was visited by six Gulls in position 34.18 North, 40.12 West which all landed on a deckload of containers.

Two finally remained on deck. From their description, one was an adult Herring Gull, *Larus argentatus*, medium grey and white above with yellow bill; the other "speckled" with a black back and slightly larger, possibly an immature Great Black-backed Gull, *Larus marinus*. The ship was roughly equidistant from Bermuda, Sable Island, Cape Race and the Azores, well out in the North Atlantic. Both species occur off the east coast of U.S.A. Both species are also quite plentiful around Bermuda in winter, and further north the Great Black-backed Gull only has been known to follow ships at times on crossings between Britain and the U.S.A. but the occasions are rare well out at sea.

## TERNS

1. Captain I. G. Lumley, M.V. *City of Colombo*, on passage from Capetown to Halifax in position 14.45 North, 14.27 West, observed a group of Roseate Terns, *Sterna dougalli*, passing over his ship on an easterly course. These species migrate southwards to Africa in the autumn and have usually been reported close offshore or in harbours by ships.

2. Captain A. G. Cruickshank, M.V. *Clan Maclean*, on passage from Las Palmas to Capetown in position 7.00 North, 14.00 West also found a Roseate Tern exhausted and wet onboard on 6th September 1975. When picked up it was put in a tissue-lined shoebox and found warmth at the entrance to the engine room, recovered 5 hours later and flew off.

## TROPIC-BIRDS

(*Note by Editor* We receive more observations of Tropic-birds (Bosun Birds) than other species as they are occasionally found on deck after collision with the ship's structure, dazzled by the ship's lights at night. When seen in flight by day, however, it is not always easy to differentiate between species.)

1. Captain T. E. Roberts, M.V. *Clan Macindoe*, in position 30.26 South, 14.40 East, west of Cape Province on 15th December 1975 sighted a "Bosun bird" attempting to alight on the foredeck over a period of one hour but without success, the ship pitching moderately. The species was probably a White-tailed Tropic-bird, *Phaethon lepturus*. This is unusual so far south and is quoted in the *Field Guide to the Birds of Southern Africa* as a "rarer species". R.N.B.W.S. has no plot of it in this area previously. Its nearest breeding area is on Ascension Island.

2. Captain R. J. Sankey, M.V. *Cumbria*, in position 40.01 South, 141.28 West on 3rd February 1976 observed a Red-tailed Tropic-bird, *Phaethon rubricauda*, and gave a very positive description. This is interesting as the furthest south in the Pacific Ocean that this species has yet been plotted.

3. Captain F. Smith, M.V. *City of Auckland*, reported a Red-billed Tropic-bird, *Phaethon aethereus*, onboard in position 17.04 North, 18.26 West on 8th July 1975. It had obviously been injured, and although carefully attended, collapsed and died on 10th July. They breed on Cape Verde Islands.

### BOOBIES

Captain J. F. Houghton, M.V. *Vancouver Forest*, during a Pacific crossing from Balboa to Osaka had a Brown Booby, *Sula leucogaster*, onboard for a total of 1,300 miles, not the first time these Boobies have enjoyed a long voyage onboard.

### CORMORANTS

Captain P. Malarky, M.V. *Gazana*. While at anchor in Yokohama Bay on 21st May 1976, a Penguin was reported swimming around the ship. Penguins however are entirely confined to the Southern Oceans (except for the Galapagos Penguin). It could have been mistaken easily when swimming for a Japanese Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax capillatus*, which are common locally and have white filoplumes covering the head in breeding plumage, a black back and white marking on underbody as reported.

### LANDBIRDS

A few reports of the many, as examples (see last paragraph).

1. M.V. *California Star* (letter from ship and good sketch). The ship was in the Caribbean when the landbird came onboard. It has been identified as an American Purple Grallinuli, *Porphyrrula martinica*. This is a species of Moorhen which occurs in America and the West Indies, normally living in swamps. It has occurred onboard ships close to land before and Captain Tuck remarks that as a young Naval Cadet 55 years ago in a Training Cruiser he had one onboard for several days before releasing it close to an island.

2. Other landbirds reported onboard in the Caribbean have been Cattle Egret, *Bubulcus ibis*, from Captain D. M. Mephail, M.V. *Avelona*; a Plumed Egret, *Egretta intermedia*, in the Straits of Malacca from Captain R. Moore, S.S. *Osaka Bay*; a long-eared Owl, *Asio otus*, in the Gulf of Cadiz from Captain A. S. Matheson, *City of Famagusta*; an Osprey, *Pandion haliaetus*, 37 miles off the coast of California from Captain D. Jack, M.V. *Fresno City*.

A comprehensive return of landbirds observed on sea passages including Meteorological returns, is included in Commander Casement's analysis of "Landbirds at Sea" in this volume.

## SHORT NOTES

### WANDERING ALBATROSSES, *Diomedea exulans*, AND ROYAL ALBATROSSES, *Diomedea epomophora*,

(see Figs. 1 and 2 on pages 42 and 43. Plumage patterns).

It is not always easy to differentiate between the two at sea, but the following note may help:

Juvenile and immature Wandering Albatrosses have much more brown on their body plumages, including cases with brownish crowns and dark tips to the tails than any Royal Albatrosses. Royal Albatrosses at *all stages* have white heads, underbodies and tails, including the dark upperwing Northern race, *d.e. Sandfordii*, but the adult Southern race, *d.e. epomophora* looks very similar to adult male Wanderers, but at close range the dark cutting edges to the mandibles of Royals should be looked for.

### GREATER FLAMINGO, *Phoenicopterus ruber*, ONBOARD

This great bird landed on the deck of M.V. *Montague* off the Bahama Islands in position 21°54'N, 74°22'W on 10th January, 1976, Acklins I. being 3 miles away. Third Mate J. Booth, R.N.B.W.S., recovered it, measured it, sketched it and took a colour photo of it standing in his washroom. Later he gave it water and released it.

An important breeding colony exists on Great I., Naqua Is, and smaller colonies exist on Andros and Abaco Is. and possibly elsewhere in the Bahama Group. One of the tallest birds that has occurred onboard at sea.

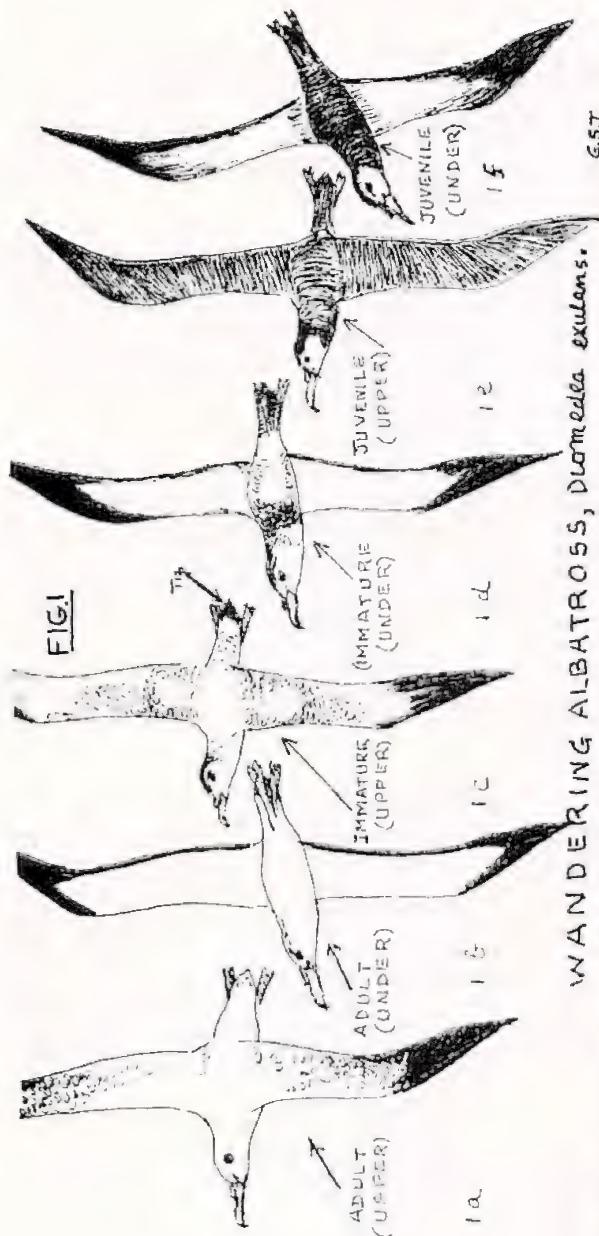
### UNINVITED "SQUATTER"

On 29th September, 1976, Captain E. F. Aikman, R.D., was walking along the harbour at St. Andrews, Fife, and noticed a number of lobster creels outside a fisherman's shed awaiting repair. A workman saw a bird enter one of the creels and called Captain Aikman over. Settled comfortably inside was an adult Moorhen which appeared not in the least alarmed by close observation. Next day the bird was still "squatting" but made no objection to being removed and placed on the grass behind the sheds, whereupon it pattered off in the manner of Moorhens, apparently unharmed.

## BOOK REVIEW

*BIRDS OF THE MALTESE ARCHIPELAGO*. By DAVID A. BANNERMAN and JOSEPH A. VELLA-GAFFIERO. Colour illustrations by CHLOE TALBOT KELLY. 500 pages, 22 colour plates, (190 birds), over 200 line drawings.

Dr David Bannerman enjoys world-wide recognition as an Ornithologist and Author, covering many areas in the world of



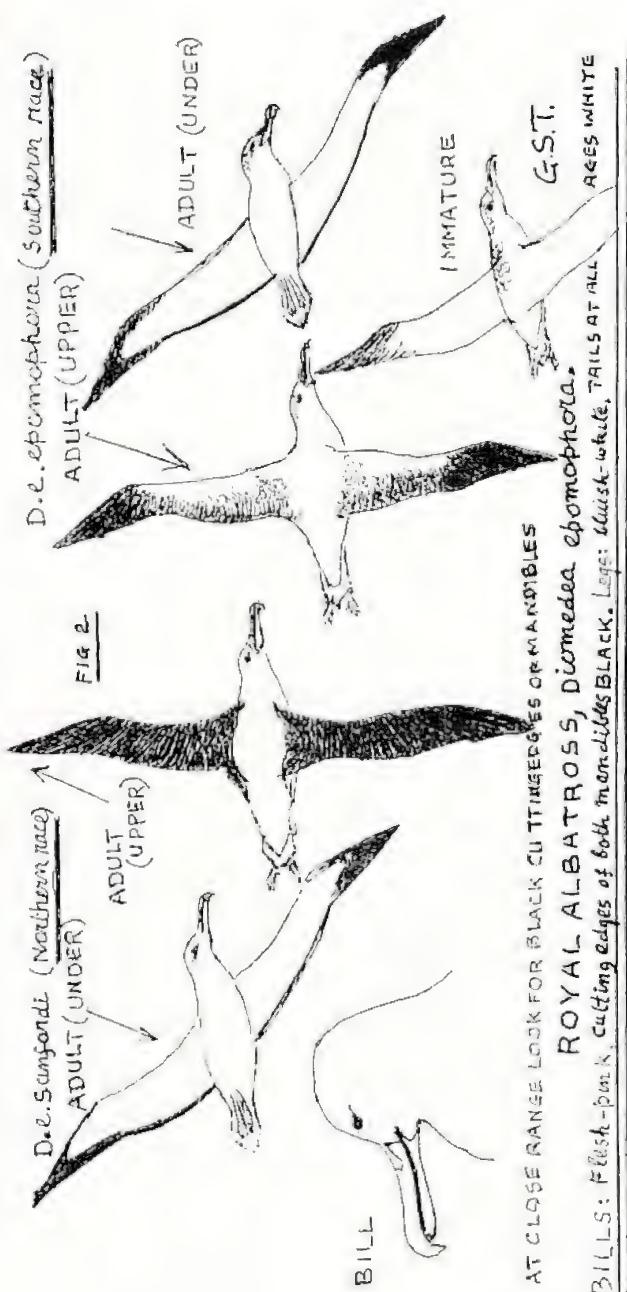
WANDERING ALBATROSS, *Diomedea exulans*.

FIG. 1

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Legs.

5



AT CLOSE RANGE LOOK FOR BLACK CUTTING EDGES OR MANDIBLES

**ROYAL ALBATROSS, *Diomedea epomophora.***  
 BILLS: FLESH-PINK, CUTTING EDGES OF BOTH MANDIBLES BLACK. LEGS: FAIRLY WHITE, TAILS AT ALL AGES WHITE

birds. This book is no exception, covering in detail the many species which cross the Mediterranean Sea on migration between Europe and Africa and are to be found in the Maltese Archipelago. Each species is described in detail together with its breeding range, its habits and habitats.

His Maltese partner, Joseph A. Gaffiero, has enjoyed a lifelong interest in the birds of the Maltese Islands, and has played a major part in the coverage of the Ornithology of the birds of the Maltese Islands.

Printed and published by the Museum Department, Republic Street, Valletta, Malta, G.C., at £M 3-75\* plus £M 0-25\* for postage and packing. (\* or £4.75 from U.K. booksellers.)

G. S. Tuck.

#### NEW MEMBERS 1976

TOTAL 23

Sillence, S. C., R.N. (retd.), 46 Greenfields, Liss, Hants, TQ5 9AA  
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Firs, Greyshott, nr. Hindhead, Surrey  
King, C. E., Communications Yeoman, 17 Gibraltar Road, Eastney,  
Portsmouth, PO4 9LS  
(\*Gilpin, A., Hon.M.Sc., 1 Claremont Villas, Clarendon Road,  
Leeds, LS2 9NY  
\*Beal, N. A. G. H., Major Royal Marines (retd.), Pied Starlings,  
21 Van der Stel Street, Kensington, B. N. Johannesburg,  
Transvaal 2001, South Africa.)  
Meeth, P., Dutch Ornithologist, Bremenlaan 5, Bentveld, Netherlands.  
\*Note Mr A. Gilpin and Major N. A. G. H. Beal, R.M., are both  
original Life Members of R.N.B.W.S. who have regained  
contact. Major Beal was the Society's first Hon. Secretary  
and largely responsible for forming the Society in 1946.

#### NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS 1976

TOTAL 4

Mrs Peter Dyer, 74 Osborne Road, Southsea, Hants.  
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Mrs S. J. Short, 2 Sea View, Dunstan, Craster, Alnwick, Northum-  
berland, NE66 3TA  
Professor Roberto P. Schlatter, Instituto de Zoologia, Universidade  
Austral de Chile, Casilla 567 Valdivia, Chile

#### OBITUARY

Captain G. E. Hodgson, M.N. 25th April 1976. (Member since 1956.)  
T. G. Winnall, Esq. 23rd May 1976. (Life Member since 1946.)  
Professor E. Brun. 13th July 1976. (Associate Member, killed in air  
accident.)

## MEMBERSHIP SUMMARY AT 1/11/76

Ex-Officio	7
Hon. Members	12
Life Members (original)	42
Life Members	11
Ordinary Members	254
Corporate Members	16

Total 326 Members + 16 Corporate Members = 342, and in addition  
 Associate Members, Museums and Libraries = 84.

### R.N.B.W.S. REPRESENTATIVES OVERSEAS, ETC.

(See Volume 24 – 1973/74 *Sea Swallow*, with following corrigendum.)

Page 90 Western Australia. *Amend* Julian Ford's address to: 21 Bowtell Road, Lesmurdie 6076.

Page 91 Canada. *Delete* all reference to Dr Paul Germain. Hong Kong. Hon. Secretary Hong Kong Birdwatching Society: C. R. Payne. Chairman: M. A. Webster. New address of Society: c/o. Department of Zoology, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.

Malta. J. Sultana is now President of the Malta Ornithological Society. Hon. Secretary's address is now P.O. Box 498, Valletta, Malta, g.c.

New Zealand. Against Dr F. C. Kinsky's address *amend* title of Dominion Museum to read National Museum.

Page 92 South America. *Delete* all reference to A. J. Brown. *Insert* Professor R. P. Schlatter, Instituto de Zoologia, Universidade Austral de Chile, Casilla 567, Valdivia, Chile.

Australia. Directorate of Public Relations, Dept. of the Navy, Canberra. *Delete* Mr Hugh Elliot's name.

Page 93 Federal Republic of Germany. *Delete* Dr G. T. Niethammer's name.

New Zealand. *Amend* Dominion Museum to read National Museum.

Norway. *Delete* Dr E. Brun's name.

U.K. (Great Britain). Royal Air Force Ornithological Society. *Amend* address of Hon. Secretary to read: Flying Officer D. Elliot, R.A.F., (Editor R.A.F.O.S. News letter), Radio Engineering Unit, R.A.F. Henlow, Bedfordshire SG16 6DN.

Page 94      Diplomatic Service Ornithological Society. *Amend* Secretary's name to J. R. James.  
Editor *British Birds*. *Amend* name to Dr Sharrock.  
The Seabird Group. *Delete* Dr Sharrock.  
Associate Members (Great Britain). *Delete* A. Blackett, J. Houston, A. D. K. Ramsay, General Sir Gerald Lathbury.

Page 95      Associate Members (Canada). *Delete* all reference to Dr P. Germain, G. W. McLain.  
Associate Members (Ethiopia). *Delete* all reference to Dr J. S. Ash.  
Associate Members (Norway). *Delete* all reference to Dr E. Brun.  
Associate Members (South Africa). *Delete* all reference to Dr Winterbottom.  
Associate Members (South America). *Delete* all reference to A. J. Brown. *Insert* Prof. R. P. Schlatter, Valdivia, Chile.  
Associate Members (Switzerland). *Amend* against R. Leveque 'Geneva' to read 'Sempach'.

Page 96      Associate Members (U.S.A.). *Delete* all reference to L. R. Haven Wiley, Jnr.

Page 95      Associate Members (Uganda). *Delete* all reference.  
After INDIA *insert* KENYA. Dr W. L. N. Tickell, Dept. of Zoology, University of Nairobi.  
After CANADA *insert* FIJI. Fergus Clunic, Esq. (Fiji Museum, Suva.)

## THE ROYAL NAVAL B

#### RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT					
1974	£	£	£	£	£
		Balance 1st December 1974			
437.42		Cash in Bank: Current Account		228.63	
		Deposit Account		220.82	
					449.45
		Subscriptions:			
64.00		Under Covenant (Current Year)		60.00	
204.76		Other (Current Year)		277.01	
13.79		In Arrears		21.25	
6.37		In Advance		9.25	
288.92					367.51
		Donations:			
22.39		Sundry		39.82	
130.00		Special		0.00	
152.39					39.82
38.95		Income Tax recovered on members covenanted subscriptions and donations			32.84
		Income Tax Transitional Relief, 74/75		7.99	
		75/76		5.32	
10.65					13.31
14.96		Interest on Investment (gross)			14.96
18.75		Interest on Deposit			19.64
		Other Receipts			
122.23		Sale of <i>Sea Swallow</i> (Vol. 24 and earlier)		141.18	
2.43		(Vol. 25 in advance)		7.60	
124.66					148.78
0.56		Sale of Christmas Cards			1.50
		Sale of <i>Seabirds of South Pacific</i> (28)			
35.66		Sale of <i>Birds of the Ocean</i> (1)			18.14
8.94		Sale of Members' Ties (5)			8.00
0.00		Balance unexpended in O.W.S. Save the Birds Appeal transferred to R.N.B.W.S. Funds			164.97
	£1131.86				£1278.92

I have examined the above account with the books and records.

Costards,  
West Lavington,  
MIDHURST, Sussex.  
1st December 1975.

# RD WATCHING SOCIETY

FOR YEAR ENDING 30th NOVEMBER 1975

1974	£	£	£	£
	537.68	Production of <i>Sea Swallow</i> Vol. 24 (550 copies) Printing		736.00
	7.90	Headed Sheets (1000)	0.00	
	6.00	Sea Report Sheets (500)	0.00	
	2.70	Audited Statement 1974	3.08	
	20.50	Bulletins (89-91)	20.75	
37.10				23.83
0.00	Members' Ties (36)			65.20
9.55	Expenses at A.G.M.			12.00
87.58	Postage and Stationery (see Note 3)			62.34
	Subscriptions			
	3.50	B.T.O.	3.50	
	5.00	I.C.B.P. (British Section)	5.00	
8.50				8.50
0.00	Bank Charges			2.50
2.00	Repaid Cheques			1.00
				3.50
	Balance 30th November 1975			
228.63	Current Account			127.09
220.82	Deposit Account			240.46
449.45				367.55

- (1) A claim for relief of Income Tax amounting to £28.85 re covenants of members subscriptions and donations for year ending 5th April 1975 is at present in the hands of the Inland Revenue.
- (2) In addition to cash in the bank, the assets of the Society include:
  - (a) £206.55 Greater London 7½% Stock 1977 fully paid;
  - (b) Stock of 38 members ties at £1.80 each - £68.40.
- (3) Additional Postage has also been met out of donations to the extent of £35.

£1131.86

£1278.92

of the Society and certify that it is in accordance therewith.

R. G. PEGLER, F.C.A.,  
*Hon. Auditor.*